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SUBJECT: TANZANIA REPORTEDLY ABSTAINS IN ERROR ON BURMA
VOTE IN SECURITY COUNCIL

(U) Classified by Ambassador John R. Bolton, Permanent Representative, for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) After the September 15 Burma vote, Ambassador Bolton approached Tanzanian Counselor Begum Taj to express surprise over her abstention on the vote. She assured the Ambassador that she had received explicit instructions from her capital to abstain on the procedural vote, implying that her government simply had not taken a position on the issue. However, Tanzanian Perm Rep Augustine Mahiga informed Ambassador Bolton September 20 that Tanzania's abstention last Friday on the motion to put Burma on the Security Council's agenda was in fact an error. According to Mahiga, Tanzania did not intend to be one of the five countries which failed to support the measure. He was chagrined to admit that there had been some disconnect between his capital and his mission on the issue. Mahiga, who was visiting Dar Es Salaam at the time of the vote, said President Kikwete had personally communicated to him the decision to support Burma's inclusion on the Council's agenda.

¶2. (C) Comment: Embassy Dar Es Salaam may wish to ascertain why the Tanzanian mission here received instructions at variance with a decision reportedly made at the highest level of the government. Although reporting indicates that Tanzania's support for our Burma initiative was apparently never clear cut, with Mahiga's explanation we are encouraged that Tanzania should be all the more likely to support follow on action later this year on a Burma resolution.

BOLTON